

Environmental Initiatives Committee

Los Altos Hills Shows Energy Leadership with Energy Efficiency/Photovoltaic Ordinance When it comes to household energy use, Los Altos Hills is among the highest 2% of northern California communities. The Environmental Initiatives Committee (EIC) proposes changes to our Town's ordinances that will help us take a leadership role in energy efficiency and photovoltaic (PV) power generation that also makes economic sense to the homeowner. Changes being proposed will completely pay for themselves in energy savings in just 5-10 years!

The Town has already eliminated permit fees for new PV installations. The EIC is proposing new ordinances that would require, for all new homes, either ENERGY STAR Home certification or 15% improvement in building energy efficiency over the existing state efficiency requirements. PV systems would count toward this improvement. The new ordinances would also permit just administrative review of new PV systems within certain height and size limits and would exempt 500 square feet of freestanding PV structures from lot development limits.



Expert studies performed for the EIC, and input from the California Energy Commission staff indicate this is achievable with a modest cost of \$1-2 per square foot that will pay for itself in energy savings. There are all-ENERGY-STAR Home developments in Santa Clara County, and PG&E even offers rebates for ENERGY STAR Homes. The proposed ordinance also includes a hardship provision to deal with unique circumstances.

The EIC believes Los Altos Hills will be the first community in California to adopt a local residential energy efficiency requirement applying to all new homes and the first community to adopt the ENERGY STAR Home performance standard.

Underground Utilities Update

The two pilot projects for undergrounding the town's utilities (on Purissima and Altamont) are scheduled to have PG&E engineering resources assigned in July. We all hope they will keep to the schedule.

But these projects — when completed in a year or two — will bury only a few thousand feet out of the 63 miles of overhead utilities criss-crossing our town. Burial of these lines helps with reliability, with public safety, and — most noticeably! — with aesthetics.

As we strive to be more "green" in our town of lovely hills & views, we hope to find a financially viable way to bury all the remaining wires. The Underground Utilities Committee is making progress on such a plan, and we hope to present it to residents for consideration later this year.

Please stay tuned.

— *Underground Utilities Committee*



Wires at corner of Vincino & Purissima Rd.

Do You Love Horses? Do you enjoy working with children? We can use your help!

The Westwind Riding Institute/4-H is a non-profit organization offering riding lessons to children with physical handicaps. We need volunteers (age 14 or older) who will help groom and lead horses and walk alongside riders during lessons. No experience is necessary, just a love for horses and a dedication to the very special children in our program. Monday and Thursday 4 to 5 p.m. and in July Mondays 7 to 8 p.m. We also need help with fundraising, public relations, and administrative work. Please call Westwind 4-H at 947-8680.



Earth Day Celebration Great Success!

Between 700 and 800 people attended the Town of Los Altos Hills fifth annual Earth Day Celebration at Westwind Barn. Thirty-two groups - conservation, environmental, and recycling organizations, school groups and LAH Town committees participated in the event. The wild cats of Leopards, Etc. were a featured attraction. Shoshone, a two-year old cougar (mountain lion) appeared for the first time at Westwind. Nakuru, a serval cat, amazed the audience with his ability in leaping to seize prey. The afternoon's event was also highlighted with a special presentation featuring a great horned owl - the most widespread North American owl species and one of our most powerful birds of prey. The demonstration was provided by the local Sky Hunters organization showing one of their educational birds. In addition to the booths of nearly three-dozen organizations, local vintners were on hand to share their knowledge and acquaint the public with their wines.

The Earth Day Celebration was sponsored by the LAH Open Space Committee.

